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Dear ENERGY STAR partners,

After extensive consideration, EPA is adjusting the overall implementation timeline of the ENERGY STAR for Homes program requirements and two specific items related to HVAC design. EPA believes that these changes will position the program for greater success in the long-term and better achieve its market transformation goals. Specific changes include the following:

1. While all homes permitted on or after January 1, 2012 must still be built to the Version 3 requirements, EPA is allowing homes permitted in 2011 to continue to be qualified under the transitional Version 2.5 guidelines through June 30, 2012. Previously, homes permitted in 2011, but completed on or after January 1, 2012 would have also been required to be labeled using the Version 3 guidelines.
2. On the HVAC System Quality Installation Contractor Checklist, for homes with final inspection dates through 12/31/2012, loads and room-level design airflows shall be permitted to be calculated for the configuration that will result in the largest load when a house plan is built with multiple configurations (e.g., orientations, elevations, options).
3. On the HVAC System Quality Installation Rater Checklist, for homes with a final inspection date through 12/31/2012, Item 1.2.1 is permitted to be within +/- 5 degrees of the 1% and 99% ACCA Manual J design temperatures for the contractor-designated design location. In addition, for each house plan with multiple configurations (e.g., orientations, elevations, options), the Rater shall confirm that the parameters listed in Items 1.2.2 - 1.2.6 are aligned with either: the rated home, or with the plans for the configuration used to calculate the loads, as provided by the contractor.
4. On the HVAC System Quality Installation Rater Checklist, homes with a final inspection date through 12/31/2012 are permitted to be qualified without enforcement of the pressure-balancing requirement in Item 2.8.

The program is already beginning to achieve meaningful energy savings under the transitional Version 2.5 guidelines as many ENERGY STAR builder partners are making significant strides to incorporate the new and more rigorous program requirements into their operations. However, due to the continued weakness in the marketplace, many homes that were permitted in 2011 and expected to be completed by the end of the year are now expected to slip into 2012. As a result, partners that were intending to qualify homes using the Version 2.5 guidelines would have been subject to Version 3 requirements.

Regarding the HVAC timeline extensions, several partners have indicated that for house plans with multiple configurations (e.g., orientations, elevations, options), additional time is needed to finish systematically reevaluating all possible plan permutations and to develop new processes to manage this new volume of analysis and information.

Note that while these changes take effect immediately, they will formally be included in policy documents, along with other modifications, clarifications, and refinements, in Revision 04, which is expected to be finalized within the next week. All partners will be notified via email when these documents are available.

**Notice for partners participating in regional or utility-sponsored programs:**

It is important to note that regional and/or utility incentive programs may choose to retain previous implementation timelines when defining the eligibility for special designations or incentives from their programs. Be sure to check with your local program representatives for more information, and note that some time may be required for them to evaluate the impact of these changes on their program. Also note that regional guidelines have been or are being developed for Hawaii, Florida, California, and the Pacific Northwest (Washington, Oregon, Montana, and Idaho). Therefore, the changes announced in this email are not applicable to these regions; rather, those regional guidelines will be updated with relevant changes on an individual basis.

Thank you for your feedback and continued support of the program. If you have questions, please contact us at [energystarhomes@energystar.gov](mailto:energystarhomes@energystar.gov).

Best Regards,  
The ENERGY STAR for New Homes Team

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This message was sent to you on behalf of the ENERGY STAR for New Homes Program. As a condition of partnership, each ENERGY STAR partner must have at least one person authorized to receive periodic e-mail updates from ENERGY STAR to ensure that the organization is aware of program changes, new resources, and other important program news. If you are not the appropriate person in your organization to receive these e-mails, please email [energystarhomes@energystar.gov](mailto:energystarhomes@energystar.gov) with "Unsubscribe" as the subject and your name and company name in the email.